

## DOCTRINAL AND CONTROVERSIAL.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

The Editors reserve the right to erase all improper personalities and objectionable expressions found in any article accepted for this department; and they alone shall be the judges.

## Parvum in Multo.

BY NOSAM.

My experience in church work is that when there are too many preachers in one congregation there is sure to be more or less confusion and fuss. Being only mortals and not angels, we are apt to breed jealousies and strife in our midst. The congregation is more than likely to be divided. Each minister has his particular friends. And unless the members have sufficient grace to resist it, this favoritism will run into dislike of all the other ministers. It is the old story: one for Paul, another for Cephas, and still another for John, and a few for Christ. That is the way it goes. When Paul preaches, the admirers of Cephas and John stay at home, with headache. This feeling grows until nobody but Paul can do right in the eyes of those who follow him, to the exclusion of the others, and so on with all of them. After awhile they go to quarreling, then farewell peace and harmony. Brethren, beware of too many preachers. Give your ministers lots to do, and there will be less danger of strife. If you have not enough for them all to do in the home church—branch out.

And now comes a man contending that the Garden of Eden was at the North Pole. His arguments are rather ingenious. He says that from no other part of the world could men have wandered to America, Europe and Asia without having to cross the ocean. Then he advances the idea that this will account for the strange attraction that the North Pole has for the human family; that in spite of the great suffering and loss of life attending the explorations of this locality, they still persist in their efforts to reach it. As far as a theory is concerned I expect this is as good as any other.

Now and then we hear a man talk about the "good old times." Just as sure as we hear this in a kind of complaining mood, put it down at once that such a person is dissatisfied with the present state of affairs. Everything is going too fast for him. The truth of the matter is, he measures the present by his ability to keep up. He is always troubling himself with the idea that the world is going to the dogs because it is going away from him; and he flatters himself that he, at least is safe. Come brother, clap on some more steam, and keep up. Religion, science, education, labor, and in fact all of God's creation makes no allowance for laggards, and those who stop behind to nurse dead issues. Everything is progressive, and excelsior—onward and upward—is the motto of the ages. Do not remain grumbling and lamenting in the valley. Pluck up and climb the mountain. The higher you go the greater will be your enjoyment.

Wife is a much better name for your bosom companion than "woman." I have heard many persons speak of "my woman" in such a tone that you would infer that she was not quite as good as he. In many parts of this country the term "man" and "woman" instead of husband and wife has become quite common; and we must not think that it is always a sign of disrespect, because many use it that love each other. Brethren, the old word wife sounds the best. If your wife is your wife call her your wife. I once heard of a man who spoke of his two wives as my "first wife" and his "second woman." This was his way of speaking of their different merits. Then there was another close-fisted man who lost his helpmate who perhaps shortened her life by exposure and hard work in helping him to accumulate. On the day of the funeral he expressed his feeling by saying, he would rather have lost the best cow on the place." The only people we find fault with are those who talk about their women and treat their wives accordingly.

A great many people walk through life with a club in one hand and a bottle of salve in the other. Such an one is always clubbing someone, and then he spends a great deal of his time in applying the

salve. As soon as he has the wounds that he gave all healed up, then he uses the club. Throw away the club, but stick to the salve; you will find enough of wounds in this world, to arouse all your sympathies without using the club.

If we were as liberal toward everybody else as we are with ourselves there would not be much fault-finding.

It is foolish to think that you can engage in any real work of reform without making enemies, you may start out with the firm determination only to attack the wrong, and not those who advocate it. Whenever you smite the idol the priest will invariably cry out. It is a great mistake for us to keep from attacking an evil because we will make enemies, and hurt feelings. The only safe plan to follow is to be sure that what you attack is wrong, then go right ahead regardless of consequences. But do not let your zeal for the right, cause you to commit a greater wrong than the one you are anxious to reform.

Personal happiness or enjoyment is not the result of either possession or attainment. It is a state of mind and character independent of what one has. It is not always those who are the happiest that have the greatest cause of happiness. Contentment will do more for one's happiness than riches or fame.

## To Young Men.

Young men, you are wanted from street corners, from the saloons and playhouse, from the loafer's rendezvous, from the idler's promenade, and from folly turn your steps into the highway of noble aim and earnest work. There are prizes enough for every successful worker; crowns enough for every honorable head that goes through the smoke of conflict to victory. But why do so few young men of early promise, whose hopes, purpose and resolve are as radiant as the colors of the rainbow fail to distinguish themselves. The answer is obvious; they are not willing to devote themselves to that toilsome culture which is the price of great success. Why, young man, there is nothing in this world that makes you look so noble and so great as when you are working for Christ and His cause. Away then, young man, with all dreams of superiority, unless you are determined to dig after knowledge, as men search for concealed gold. Remember, that every man has in himself the power to do good or evil, but he only gets credit for the good. Perhaps you are, what the world calls poor, what of that? Most of the men whose names are as household words, were also the children of poverty. Captain Cook, the circumnavigator of the globe, was born in a mud hut, and started in life as a cabin boy. Up, then, young man, and gird yourself for the work of self-cultivation. Set a high price on your leisure moments. They are sands of gold; properly expended they will procure for you a stock of great thoughts, thoughts that will fill, stir, invigorate and expand the soul. The great thoughts of great men are to be procured at prices almost nominal; you can, therefore easily collect a library of choice standard works. But, above all, learn to reflect even more than you read. Without thought, books are the sepulchre of the soul, they only immure it. Let thought and reading go hand in hand, and the intellect will rapidly increase in strength and gifts. A great deal of talent is lost in this world for the want of a little courage; every day sends to the grave a number of obscure men, who have only remained in obscurity because their timidity has prevented them from making a first effort, and, who, if they could have been induced to begin would in all probability have gone to great lengths in the career of fame. The fact is, that to do anything in this world worth doing, we must not stand back shivering. Nerve thyself for goodness. Never let it be said of thee: he helped to swell the tide of sin, by pouring its influence into its channels. If thou art feeble in mental strength throw not that drop into a polluted current.

Awake, arise, young man, assume that beautiful garb of virtue. It is difficult to be pure and holy, put on thy strength then and God will crown you and shield you for all Christian warfare.

M. G.

## "Is This the Way?"

A poor child, straying into a Sunday school one day, asked simply: "Is this the way to heaven?" The Superintendent was for a moment startled. Was the school indeed the way to heaven? Was he trying to make it so? Were his teachers intent on the same object? The artless question struck home. From desk to class the question went round with a thrill. What were they all doing? Whither were they all tending? The question was like an angel suddenly come into their midst to make a record of all that transpired in that school.

"Is this the way?" The question might profitably be asked in many a religious circle; not only in the Sunday-school, but in the prayer-meeting, in the place of public worship, in the sociable, the bazaar, the *soiree*, and all the different places where Christian people are assembled, the question is most appropriate—"Is this the way?" Is it the way of blessing, the way of life, the way of peace, the way of salvation? Is it the way to win the favor of God, and to secure the confidence of men? Is it the way to make men believe that religion is a reality and the world an empty show? or are men sometimes convinced by the conduct of those who profess godliness, that religion is the form and worldliness the reality?—THE COMMON PEOPLE.

## Spurgeon on the Theatre.

"Are there not many persons who find in the theatre precisely that kind of recreation and rest which is most useful for the discharge of their daily work?"

"It may be," said Mr. Spurgeon, "but I don't know any of them. You see, I live in a world apart from all those things, and so do my people. We argue in this way. Granting it is perfectly safe and profitable for myself to go to the theatre, if I go, a great number of those will go to whom it will do positive harm. I will not be responsible for alluring by my example into a temptation, which, but for my self-indulgence, they would entirely escape.

"I will give you an instance of how this works out. When I go to Monaco, the grounds of the gambling hell there are the most beautiful in the world. I never go near them, and why? Not because I think there is any danger of my passing through the gardens to the gambling tables. No! but a friend of mine once related the following incident to me:—One day M. Blanc met me and asked me how it was I never entered his grounds. 'Well, you see,' I said, 'I never play, and as I make no returns whatever to you, I hardly feel justified in availing myself of the advantage of your grounds.' 'You make a great mistake, said M. Blanc. 'If it was not for you and other respectable persons like yourself who come to my grounds, I should lose many of the customers who attend my gambling saloons. Do not imagine that because you do not play yourself that you do not by your presence in my grounds contribute very materially to my revenue. Numbers of persons who would not have thought of entering my establishment, feel themselves quite safe in following you into my garden; and from thence to the gaming-table the transition is easy.' 'After I heard that,' continued Mr. Spurgeon, 'I never went near the gardens. And the same argument applies to the theater.'—PALL MALL GAZETTE.

## Getting Square.

There are many people who, when injured or wronged by others, propose to "get square with them" by some method of retaliation. The wisdom of this course does not seem apparent. I may get square with a mean man by making myself as mean as he is. I may get square with an ugly man by making myself as ugly as he is. I may get square with a dishonest man, by myself becoming dishonest. I may get even with a drunkard, by making myself as drunk as he.

By this method we have two wrongs instead of one; and two wrongs neither of which is likely to make a right. It does not profit us to get square with those who have abused us, or misused us. Why need we descend to their level? "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good."

—SEL.